

School Committee Meeting Minutes
Town Offices
July 20, 2004

Present: Gary Bourassa, Chairperson
Hugh Muffoletto, Vice Chairperson
Don Parker

Also Present: Dr. Thomas Scott, Superintendent
Patricia Stern, Business Manager

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m.

As there was no Public Participation or Old Business, the committee moved forward to discuss Business Affairs.

Patricia Stern reviewed Payables Warrants 458 and 455. She also reviewed Payroll Warrants 801,301,351 and 851. Mrs. Stern informed the committee that the Year-end Financial Statement was not ready for review. She was confident that the information would be available by next week.

Before moving to discuss New Business, Dr. Scott asked for permission from the committee to fill a custodial position recently vacated. Mrs. Stern indicated that it is critical that this position be filled as the custodial department is already short staffed. The department has been able to accomplish their summer workload with the help of an MCI crew as well as a crew from Bemis. It would be possible to fill this position from the current staff or from a field of candidates for the currently advertised part-time positions. Mr. Parker motioned to fill the existing, budgeted position. Mr. Muffoletto seconded the motion. In discussion, Mr. Muffoletto asked if the position could become a part-time position as he would rather see cuts to the custodial department instead of the teaching staff. Mrs. Stern stated that by hiring personnel for less than 20 hours a week no benefits would be paid, thereby saving money. Mr. Muffoletto motioned to hire two part-time persons, not to exceed 19 hours per week, per person. Mr. Parker seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

New Business:

Dr. Scott reviewed the FY05 potential budget reductions. He explained that he developed a plan based on conversations with Kyle Keady, Town Administrator. Dr. Scott also stated that Mr. Keady had done so as well with similar results. Dr. Scott explained that he prioritized the positions by which order he would hire staff back should money be received from the state as anticipated. Mr. Keady is hoping to obtain information this week as to how much money and when it should be received. This money includes a reduction in high school tuition costs, state lottery money, additional revenue from Center School, bonding issues and cherry sheets. Dr. Scott stated that, according to this information, five positions could be reinstated. Dr. Scott noted that before any of this money can be allocated to the school department approval is necessary from Town Meeting. However, Dr. Scott stated that if the town is assured that this money will indeed coming to Shirley, he might be willing to take the risk of rehiring personnel before it is received and allocated.

Mr. Muffoletto voiced his concern about the positions that Dr. Scott recommended cutting. Mr. Muffoletto stated that he feels that more administrative cuts should have been made, rather than

teaching staff. Dr. Scott was asked if the school committee has a say in which positions could be cut. Dr. Scott stated that personnel issues are the superintendents' responsibility but that he would listen to any recommendations made by committee members. Dr. Scott suggested the members meet next week to discuss the positions. He also noted that decisions are needed soon as time is running out should he need to reorganize programs and make further cuts.

The committee motioned to adjourn the meeting until after the Joint Board of Selectman's meeting. Motion was seconded and approved. The meeting was suspended at 7:00 p.m. so that the members could attend the town "deficit work group" meeting.

The school committee meeting reconvened at 8:45 p.m.

Dr. Scott presented the District Goals update. He stated that once MCAS results are received in the fall, a final report will be presented to the school committee. Discussion of the update was tabled until the next meeting to give members time to review the information.

Dr. Scott expressed his wish to have the committee meet with the top candidate for Director of Instruction. He noted that he has not received a return call from the additional candidate he is to interview. Mr. Muffoletto stated that he feels that Dr. Scott should assume the role of SPED Director until the correct person can be found for the job. Mr. Parker voiced his concern that SPED Director and Superintendent are two very different and time-consuming roles for one person to undertake. It was suggested that Dr. Scott keep interviewing.

The committee went into Executive Session at 9:30 to consider a student issue.

Roll Call: Mr. Bourassa: Yes
 Mr. Muffoletto: Yes
 Mr. Parker: Yes

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Karen Gutheil